The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1696 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D.C., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1943 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 23, NO. 41

WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
IN
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

FACING *the* FACTS
With PHILIP PEARL

Today we expose a fake. His name is H. V. Kaltenborn. He poses as a purveyor of news and facts through his radio broadcasts. He pretends to be an impartial reporter on the American scene. We have long had reason to suspect that his broadcasts were violently slanted against labor. Now we have the proof. We wish to present it to you, straightforwardly and chronologically. Here is the story:

On Aug. 8, in a sponsored "news" broadcast over the National Broadcasting Company's nation-wide network, Kaltenborn made the statement "that on every basis of comparison the non-union plants always seem to come on ahead of the union plants." He was talking about production efficiency in aircraft plants.

This statement was immediately challenged by Jack Cadden, editor of Rochester And Vicinity Labor, who happened to hear it. He was prevented from seeing or talking to Kaltenborn by an adamantly protective secretary. Likewise, he failed to get any satisfaction from representatives of NBC to whom he spoke. They said they couldn't consider complaints "from just one little labor paper." So Cadden took up the matter with the writer and asked for help.

The First Alibi

We sent a protest to William Burke Miller, of NBC, who passed it on to Kaltenborn himself. Kaltenborn then wrote us a letter. We can't print the whole thing here. He said that he was big understanding that "actual comparison records issued by the War Production Board" confirmed his statement that non-union aircraft plants had higher production efficiency records than union plants. He added:

"If you can present me with convincing evidence that by and large unionized aircraft plants are making better production records than non-union plants, I will be very glad to present that evidence to my radio audience."

That seemed fair enough to us. Our next move was to request an official report from the War Production Board which would give the facts one way or another. This took a little time. But finally we received the report which was prepared and signed by Irving J. Brown, Assistant to the Vice Chairman of the War Production Board, Office of Labor Production.

And what did the report say? Unfortunately, we lack space to print the text. It covered a study of forty-four types of planes, thirty-three of which were produced under union conditions and eleven under non-union. All types were included. The report stated flatly that union plants had the highest efficiency records in heavy bombers, medium bombers, combat cargo planes and Naval reconaissance and two and one-engine transports. The one category where a non-union plant led was in fighter planes.

Kaltenborn Evades

However, the report found that on the whole "the average efficiency of the thirty-three union plants, as against the eleven non-union, is equal."

Frankly, this report was somewhat disappointing to us. We expected average superiority of union plants, in addition to individual supremacy. Nevertheless, the official facts completely refuted Kaltenborn's original statement. So we sent it to him, demanding a retraction which "you owe to organized labor, to the National Broadcasting Company, to your sponsors and yourself."

His answer has just been received. In it Kaltenborn has the audacity to assert that he has "personal knowledge of the performance of non-union plants" which was "acquired in confidence" which he trusts more than the official report. He disparages it. Brown's conclusions he says "interpretations" of statistics and states:

"Unless, therefore, we can obtain the basic information from which Mr. Brown drew his conclusions, we cannot resolve the issue between us."

The joker in this clever refusal to retract is that Kaltenborn knows and admits the Government refuses to release the information and figures because of security reasons. It might endanger our war effort to let such secret information out.

The foregoing is just a summary of the events leading up to the big doings in this case. The fun is just beginning. Labor will not let this issue drop. President Green, informed of the facts, has announced he will send the full record in the case to the files of NBC and the Federal Communications Commission with a demand for "summary and remedial action against this flagrant abuse of the right of free speech." So keep tuned to this station for the next installment of this serial.

F.D.R. Lauds AFL, Pledges Rollback

Boston—President Roosevelt praised labor's voluntary contributions to the war effort and pledged action to reduce the cost of living in his message to the AFL's 63rd annual convention. He said:

"Please accept my sincere thanks for your invitation to attend and address the Sixty-third Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor in Boston on October fourth. I am sure you will understand that the many duties of the present time make it impossible for me to accept this invitation.

"I desire, however, this opportunity to extend to the officers and members of the Federation my cordial greetings on the occasion of the convention. Please assure those in attendance and all of the constituent membership of my appreciation of the splendid work that has been done by American wage earners in turning out the munitions and implements of war. The battle of production is being won in every shipyard, machine shop, factory and construction outfit in this country, and the skill, speed and adaptability of American working men and women have made possible the outfitting and equipment of our military forces in all parts of the world. The fact that wage earners of this country not only in the production drive, but in the support of the war effort by the purchase of war bonds, both out of union treasuries and out of personal subscriptions, is one of the items of American life of which we are very proud. In this free country we are proving ourselves able voluntarily all this to accomplish the support of the great war effort and to stand back of the brave men who go into combat.

"And while I express my gratification for what you have done in the past, I know that you will share with me the expectation and the challenge that American labor will do more and more until every necessity is met, until every battle is won, and the victory is won and of the peace established. Increasing efforts to maintain present production levels and to increase them where necessary. The working people will be asked to continue to support the war effort by investing their money and by making sacrifices and modifying their personal habits. These sacrifices are greater in the community as a whole.

"Many of the members of your unions have gone into the armed services. Many of your sons and brothers are taking their place in the combat zones. Many of your daughters and sisters have assumed new and strange dangers in the Nursing Corps and in the Auxiliary services. The war is very real to you. The cooperation of American labor in a no-strike policy and in the stabilization of wages and household economy are expressions of this realization.

"I ask your continued help in all aspects of the war effort and in the effort to stabilize the domestic economy. We anticipate a good deal of success in the rollback of prices which will stabilize and reduce the cost of living to consumers. For this the informed cooperation of all your members is needed.

"With best wishes for your successful convention, I am

Very truly yours,
"(Signed) FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT."

WLB APPROVES PAY BOOST FOR PAPER DISTRIBUTORS

Washington, D. C.—An increase of $1.66 a week for chandlers, helpers, warehouse men, hand-truck drivers, men and shipping clerks was unanimously approved by the War Labor Board trucking commission in a case involving New York paper distributors. The increase would be retroactive to Oct. 1, 1942.

The distributors represent forty-nine wholesale companies with 218 employees, and thirty-three retail companies with 112 employees invested as members of Local 97, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, an American Federation of Labor affiliate.

The approved rate of $1.15 an hour for small truck drivers raises the rate to the minimum of hotel paper rates in the New York paper industry.

FEDERAL EMPLOYES TOTAL DECLINES TO 3,223,375

Washington, D. C.—A decrease of 21,466 a week for chandlers, helpers, warehouse men, hand-truck drivers, men and shipping clerks was unanimously approved by the War Labor Board trucking commission in a case involving New York paper distributors. The increase would be retroactive to Oct. 1, 1942.

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AFL Convention Roars Approval As Green Assails Labor Baiters Who Smear Unions Fine War Record

Delegates Cheer To Echo As AFL Chief Retorts To Legion Commander

Boston.—In a voice ringing with sincerity and fervor, President William Green brought the delegates at the AFL convention to their feet with roars of applause as he told off the labor-baiters of America as they had never been answered before.

His challenge was dramatically followed a speech by National Commander Warren Atherton, of the American Legion, who praised the patriotic policies of the American Federation of Labor but punctured his otherwise mild remarks with the charge that workers who strike in wartime are guilty of treason.

Reading that this intemperate statement would be capitalized upon by the hostile press as six excuse for anti-labor smear headlines, Mr. Green replied immediately. His address made such a profound impression upon the delegates that a motion to print it in full and publish it as widely as possible was introduced from the floor and adopted unanimously. The text of his address follows:

"First of all may I extend to Commander Atherton in your name and in your behalf, our sincere thanks for his visit to this convention and for the address which he delivered. He was right in his conclusions when he stated that we welcome a frank discussion of all subjects and all questions affecting the American way of life and affecting our economic, social and industrial interests. In fact, the American Federation of Labor conventions are open forums of discussion. We speak with frankness. We act in the same way. We face all issues courageously. We proclaim our views and adopt our policies openly.

"It appears to me that I can with perfect propriety point out to the commander that there who seek perfection in an imperfect world are doomed to disappointment, but he who follows the pathway of logic and reason, looking above and beyond the inconsequential faults of mankind's minority, will realize that after all we are making a fine record in a most imperfect world.

"The American Federation of Labor did not hesitate or wait a moment. Immediately after receiving over the radio, through the press and otherwise, information that Japanese had treacherously attacked America at Pearl Harbor we stepped out and acted at once. A conference of the representatives of this great movement was assembled to meet in the city of Washington. The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor met at the same time and there, after solemnly, seriously and carefully considering the whole situation, we announced our pledge to the United States of cooperation and support. That came from the honest hearts, the frank consciences of those men, representing as they did the heart and conscience of American labor. And then, conformity with the program then developed, we pledged to the President of the United States a no-strike policy for the duration of this conflict. That was made voluntarily, and you must understand the real value of the use of the strike weapon in order to understand the pledge that American labor made to the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States. The strike is the ultimate weapon of our economic strength and its use, after all, is the last resort, the protection of labor, the means that it uses to lift its standard of life and living and to protect its own interests. It is the weapon in defense of its interests, and when it agreed to place that behind the door and leave it there until the war was over it honestly pledged itself to support the government in the future.

"Now, Mr. Commander, what has been the record? Examine it, will you please. The President of the United States, who keeps the record and studies it carefully day by day and month by month, has spoken to us in a convincing and eloquent way and said, 'Men, you have kept that pledge 99.9 percent in the United States of America.'

"And that statement is not imperfect men. I maintain that it is an amazing record made good in an imperfect world.

"We hold business management and those connected with business, Mr. Commander, in high regard. We feel that business as a whole has made a good record during the war—and in referring to business I mean the owners and managers of industry. We do not denounce industry as a whole at any time because of the sins committed by some manager or some director of a corporation or the owners of some industry or a minority of industry. Consequently, we do not denounce industry as a whole because some steel corporation in America supplied our Government during this emergency with defective armorplate. Nor do we denounce industry as a whole because some wire corporation supplied the government with defective wire. Nor do we denounce industry as a whole because some greedy employers of labor have sought to make profits that are unreasonable out of this war emergency. We say, 'You have already received from the Government,' but industry as a whole does not approve of it and we hold them in high regard.

"Is this a world without sin? Do the members of the church always live up to the high standards set for them? Do the fraternal organizations maintain their standards of righteousness always? Do you find perfection in family life, the most sacred organization in America? 'I will venture to say that there are sinners in the American Legion.

"The American Federation of Labor has never officially ordered or approved a strike of any one, five, or ten men, or a hundred men since the sacrifly attack was made upon us at Pearl Harbor. We have kept the faith and we are keeping the faith. We are producing the planes, the guns, the tanks, the ships, the war materials necessary in order that our brave men on the battlefields of Africa, in the Southern Pacific, in Italy, and wherever the war is being fought may be adequately supplied.

"They have been victorious, I might well be of interest to tell you that since Pearl Harbor—while the soldiers of production represented here in this convention have been giving their skill, their lives, their training, their genius, and their American heritage to the production of materials in order to make the war a success, 80,000 of them have been killed and we have buried them, many of them in unknown graves. Seven million have been injured. Does that mean that we have surrendered up, or have we repeatedly referred to the fact that—we buried them—80,000—killed—killed while serving as soldiers of production in the mills, the mines and the factories of these United States. Does that count for anything or does it mean anything? No workers in the world have ever made such a record as American workers have made in the United States since Pearl Harbor.

"I ask you, Mr. Commander, to look high, look above the petty things, look above the human imperfections, the incidental things of life, and behold portrayed like the new dark before your eyes the workers of America, the workers. They are the best in the entire world. We are proud of them.

"They have made their sacrifices. They have given their sons and the homes to work in the mills and the factories. We have supported the regimentation of workers during this war in a very large way, because the winning of the war is paramount and above every other consideration. But we intend to work with all the-minded people in bringing about a reconversion and a readjustment when the war ends. The children must go back to the schools. The women must go back to the workshop and men must take their places in the home as a wife and mother. We are opposed to the exploitation of women workers and children during normal times. We will stand with you in carrying out that program.

"Then, Mr. Commander, there are 1,000,000 members of the American Federation of Labor in the armed services of this nation. We have planned and are planning for their return, as well as for the return of others who are serving on the battlefields. It is our firm determination to see that the full employment policy and national service act of 1943 is carried out so that they come back to America, and if necessary we will compel employers to give them their places back where they were before they went away.

"We shall provide for the full employment of this war by which every man who enlisted in the service of the nation may find an opportunity to resume his normal life, to live in the American way, working and serving in the field of industry and commerce as well.

"I have spoken in response to your address, Mr. Commander, in a sincere and frank manner. I have spoken to you in the kindest terms. I want you to get our point of view. It is my wish that we may all see this situation as it is. Perhaps when Gabriel blows his trumpet in the morning and the dead shall rise from the earth, and those who are living shall be assembled, as Holy Writ tells us, for the purpose of ascending into Heaven we may then construct a perfect world out of imperfect material. But until then, Mr. Commander, we must deal with the imperfections of human nature and serve as best we can."

Convention Highlights

Boston.—Matthew Woll, head of Labor's League For Human Rights, pledged $ 10,000 check to Count Sforzatonini, chairman of the Italian-American Labor Council, for the purpose of rehabilitating the free trade union movement in liberated Italy. The impressive ceremony, serving as a symbol of American friendship for the oppressed people of Italy, took place on the platform of the AFL convention here immediately after the delegates unanimously adopted the following report:

"The American Federation of Labor, which has consistently fought Fascism and has never forgotten its fraternal ties with the organized labor movement of Italy, pledges itself to help the workers of Italy with all the means possible and at its disposal. It will assist in the complete destruction of Fascism in Italy and will aid in the restoration of democracy in that unhappy country until the Italian people win the blessings of a just peace and the benefits of freedom and democracy as announced in the Atlantic Charter."

In similar spirit, the delegates, on the eve of the Jewish Day of Atonement, adopted a report from the Committee on International Labor Relations which condemned Hitler's slaughter of the Jews in Europe in the strongest terms and recommended a program of action in behalf of refugees from Nazi persecution.

The convention unanimously called upon the United Nations to provide temporary havens for such refugees, demanded the establishment in the terms of persecution when the war ends, to mete out extreme punishment to those guilty of perpetrating the mass slaughters and to establish Palestine as a permanent homeland after the war for Jews who wish to settle there.

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With regard to pending legislation to lift the ban on Chinese immigration, the convention refused to change the AFL's traditional policy in favor of outright exclusion but directed the Executive Council to make a thorough study of the subject with a view to possible future revision of the immigration laws.

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Joseph A. Padway, AFL counsel, made a stirring speech to the convention in which he warned of the coming Fascism in America through the enactment of State and Federal laws regulating and regimenting the activities of labor unions.

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The fraternal delegates to the convention from the British Trade Union Congress—Harry Harrison and Alex Taylor—in addition to bringing reports to the convention on labor conditions in England and Russia, which were received with loud applause, President Green served emphatic notice that the AFL is eager to establish friendly British labor movements.

The outburst of applause greeted this statement made it clear that the convention will close the door to direct relations with Soviet labor. But Mr. Green emphasized that the AFL stands for the extension of all possible war aid to Russia by America.

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Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins ridiculed exaggerated press reports on strikes. She said the situation is remarkably good. She declares got a laugh when she pointed out that in the past year she has seldom if ever been wakened in the early hours of the morning by frantic telephone reports on strike crises.

* * *

Other convention speakers during the day's sessions included Tom Girdler, director of War Robert P. Patterson, Montgomer Francis J. Haas, Under-Secretary Administrator L. Metcalfe Walling, Chairman Arthur J. Altmeyer of the Social Security Board, Director Edward J. Phelan of the International Labor Organization and Treasury Delegate Joseph Knowles of the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress. Because of lack of space, reports of their addresses must be deferred to later issues.

* * *

Besides presiding over all convention sessions, President Green fulfilled many out-of-city speaking engagements, notably one before the Boston Chamber of Commerce. In a talk to the business men, he urged the AFL chief told the businessmen that it is up to them to preserve free enterprise in America by instituting a post-war production program to provide jobs for all and by declaring frankly post-war differences with trade unions. Otherwise, he warned, the Government may be forced to step in and take over, with consequent extension of Federal regulation and regimentation of private business and labor want to avoid.

Boston Conclave Takes Decisive Action On Many Issues During First Week

Boston.—Swinging into lively debate and decisive action on the nation's major problems, the 63rd annual convention of the American Federation of Labor opened its second week here with these outstanding developments:

1—Repeal of the Connally-Smith anti-labor bill demanded by unanimous vote.

2—National Labor Relations Board denounced for "perverting the Wagner Act into a charter for organizing rival unions by means of unlawful raids."

3—Incentive plans disapproved because their purpose is "to create some form of speed-up" not consonant with the established practices and policies of affiliated unions.

4—Unanimous opposition voted against imposition of a federal sales tax, with instructions to the Executive Council to oppose also any increase in taxes levied on wages or compensation of the workers and that any increase in the amounts withheld from wages be in the form of savings represented by government bonds.

5—Adoption of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell amendments to the Social Security Act endorsed.

6—Unshaken resistance to direct collaboration with government-dominated trade union movement of Soviet Russia evidenced by delegates in response to address by President Green.

7—Traditional AFL policy in favor of exclusion of Chinese immigrants endorsed with proviso that the Executive Council be instructed "to make a thorough study of possible future revision of immigration and naturalization laws as affecting Oriental races."

8—Repeal of the poll tax which bars Negroes and impoverished white workers in six southern states urged by acclamation.

Many other important matters dealing with war and post-war problems still remained to be disposed of at the conclusion of the first week's session.

Paul V. McNutt, director of the War Manpower Commission, drew extended cheers from the delegates when he declared in a convention address that the workers of America "are doing the greatest job in the history of the human race." McNutt made it clear he favors the application of voluntary methods in the solution of the mtion's manpower problems, a position in which President Green and the delegates heartily concurred.

Perhaps the most significant conclusion to be drawn from the spirit evidenced by the delegates during the first week of the convention is labor's increasing resentment against being lectured at.

This was made abundantly clear by the tremendous ovation given President Green when he responded to the address of the national commander of the American Legion.

The attempts of the anti-labor press and labor-baiters in official positions to smear the entire labor movement for the few and inconsequential union mistakes while ignoring the tremendous accomplishments of organized labor in the war effort have gotten under the skin of the union representatives gathered here. They are fed up with this bunk and they are determined that the public must no longer be misled by such false propaganda.

Evidence of interest was also displayed by the delegates in how the trade union movement will be affected by federal and state anti-union legislation adopted during the past year. Copies of AFL Counsel Joseph A. Padway's authoritative and forceful analysis of these laws were exhausted as the delegates all sought extra copies for transmittal to their local unions.

AFL Membership Hits New High Mark, As Machinists Union Returns To Fold

Boston—Once again the official dues-paid membership has broken all previous records heights and now stands at the huge total of 6,564,141. This was announced to the AFL convention here by Secretary-Treasurer George Meany following the return of the International Association of Machinists with more than 625,000 members.

The Machinists had withdrawn from affiliation last spring as a result of a long standing jurisdictional dispute. Conferences with a special committee representing the Executive Council followed. The agreement to reaffiliate was reached here at further conferences between representatives of the union and the Executive Council.

Announcement of this constructive move from the convention floor was greeted by resounding cheers of joy. The big delegation of labor who freely predicted that the membership of the AFL will soon go beyond the eight million mark by the time the next convention rolls around.

World's Strongest Naval Air Force Built By U. S. Labor In Three Years

Washington, D. C. — In the short space of three years, between July 1, 1940, and July 1, 1943, the United States Naval air force has grown to be the most powerful naval air force in the world, Rear Admiral C. M. Woodward, U. S. N., Chief of the Navy's Industrial Incentive Division, reported. "American workers know that their freedom is at stake and they are willing to fight to preserve it. Through this report they are serving notice to Hitler and Hirohito that they have just begun to fight," Our soldiers of production in the aircraft factories know that more and more planes will be needed to win the final victory and I am confident that they not only will produce the required number of planes for the Navy but also that they will produce them ahead of schedule."

In addition to the 18,587 planes produced under Navy contracts, during the three-year period, almost 9,000 planes were built under Army contracts making over 22,000 planes added to the naval air force. Of this total received from the Army, 1,500 were bombers and utility planes with about 450 were combat aircraft.

In July, 1940, the Naval air force consisted of 1,744 planes, of which 1,197 were fighters and bombers. In July of this year the Navy had 13,260 planes, a ten-fold increase. During the three years the Navy lost or wrote off as obsolete 6,000 planes and transferred 2,500 to other agencies, a sizeable air force within itself.

DRAFT DEFERMENT EASES FARM LABOR SITUATION

Washington, D. C.—Draft deferments and other measures taken to conserve agriculture labor put 800,000 more men of military age to work on farms during the first 6 months of this year than in the same months of 1942, according to a report issued by the Department of Agriculture. This increase was sufficient to offset the losses of workers of military age from farms during the last half of 1942, so that the number of such farm workers in July of this year was the same as the number a year earlier.